

GREECE, THE BALKANS, AND THE FEDERAL PRINCIPLE

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I

AN Eastern problem existed even before the Turkish conquest of Constantinople. Strictly speaking, however, the Eastern problem since that event has consisted in the need for liberation of south-eastern Europe from the Turkish occupation of the Balkan Peninsula; for what is known as Turkey in Europe has never been anything but a military occupation of the Balkans. The Eastern problem has had many phases, and it has been always vitally connected with the interests and aims of the European Powers. But since the coalition of four Balkan States—Greece, Bulgaria, Servia, and Montenegro—in a firm understanding to expel Turkish rule from Europe, the Eastern problem has changed aspect fundamentally, in that it has become more complicated just when it approached solution. The Balkan League was a surprising event which profoundly disturbed the Great Powers, especially the neighbouring empires, who did not suspect that the four States had eluded the Teutonic vigilance so well as to form a coalition. And even after they saw this astounding fact they did not believe that it would end otherwise than in the complete triumph of Turkey. So they were even more disturbed when they saw that within two months each of the

allied nations went from victory to victory, until they so curtailed the Turkish Empire as to reduce it to the size of a small English county. The reader may think, what a pity the coalition had not been brought about some years earlier, before Germany and Austria had time to exercise their nefarious influence upon the efforts of those tyrannized peoples who were striving to free themselves from an intolerable yoke. The answer to this is that the Balkan nations were so absorbed in the struggle for acquiring consciousness of individuality that their energies could not be spared for other but military activities. In an age of economical development elsewhere, the Balkan States were reduced to the necessity of concentrating all their attention on safeguarding national existence. Unfortunately, certain factors interfered even with military efficiency so much that it has been lamentably retarded. Among these factors one has been the too egoistic turn taken by their national ideals. Unable to perceive the value of co-operation, or to admit the fact of human solidarity, or to trust the guidance of goodwill, they became intensely jealous of one another, and each developed a spirit of Chauvinism which gradually made all understanding appear impossible. The same great ideal actuated them all—namely, the expulsion of Turkey—and while each strained every nerve to contribute to that desirable end, at the same time it aimed at installing itself as Turkey's successor. We must add that false notions in regard to the object of human life, imported by the materialistic school prevailing a generation or two ago, brought these unsophisticated races of the Balkans to the belief that might is right, that success means living by preventing others from living, and that, after all, this is compatible with the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. As usual, the teaching of the interpreters of Darwinism was mistaken for Darwinism itself. Kropotkin, in his "Mutual Aid," enlarges upon this misconception, and shows that mutualism is so fully in harmony with the great law of evolution that the doctrine of the survival of the fittest is

seen in its true light only when we take into account the equally great law of association, so that we may regard those who combine for the struggle of life as the really fittest. Darwin did not ignore the law of association, and nothing warrants us in supposing that human beings should be less capable of combining in the struggle for life than the other animals whose instinct for combination is so eloquently pointed out by Kropotkin. Had the Balkan States been animated in time by this spirit, they would have seen the folly of their rivalries, and they would have made it a common cause to achieve their common object without needing to invite "disinterested" helpers from without. This brings me to the mention of the third factor, which retarded their awakening.

It is the sinister influence of foreign intriguers in various guises—diplomats, financiers, exploiters, agents, advisers, etc. The scope of these instruments of the neighbouring Empires would not be wide, if the Balkan rulers were not passionately ambitious for power and fame. Their personalism, if I may coin this word to express their disease, has been so intense that they were gradually led to eliminate from their mentalities all thought of their countries, and to become absorbed in the furtherance of schemes for their personal aggrandizement. Thus the narrow ambitions of the chiefs of the States is the fourth factor in the retardment.

Not until 1912 did it become possible to perceive the soundness of common action against their common tyrant. The coalition of the four States will remain for ever a record of glory for those who initiated it. And History will never forgive the Bulgarian Chauvinist party (or perhaps, shall we say, King Ferdinand) for breaking up that nucleus of a possible Balkan federation, in furtherance of the objects and aims of the Teutonic Governments, and to the disgrace and ruin of Bulgaria. Dr. Dillon, in his masterly review of 1914,* reveals certain facts known only

* "Europe in 1914," *The Daily Telegraph*, December 31.

to a very few. He explains how the throne of King Ferdinand was saved by means of an Austrian promise that the Treaty of Bukarest was before long to be annulled through Vienna diplomacy, or somehow. I happened to be in Sofia last June, and had opportunity to learn that, were it not for this Austrian assurance, the Bulgarian politicians would not have been able to prevent the deposition of the King, perhaps the abolition of kingship.

It may be well to explain my visit to the Bulgarian capital—a visit which could not be forgiven at that time by my fellow-countrymen, who now, however, seem to realize the value of inter-Balkan amity. In May and June last I visited all the Balkan capitals, and had conversations with prominent men, including the Prime Minister of Serbia, M. Take Jonsescu of Roumania, M. Tontcheff of Bulgaria, and members of the Greek Government, with a view to forming an inter-Balkan Committee for the furtherance of an inter-Balkan *entente* in defence of the peninsula from possible attacks. I had seen just before some well-known pacifists and Socialist leaders in Brussels, Berlin, Vienna, and Budapest, and with this effort several Serbian, Roumanian, and Bulgarian journalists co-operated, and more particularly the Bulgarian Socialist members of the Parliament. I must mention that of all parties in the Balkan Peninsula the Socialists have been the only real advocates of Balkan Federation, and this object is one of the demands in the programme of the Greek Socialist party, as well as in all the Balkan Socialist parties.

Unfortunately, in the Balkans hatred is preached as a gospel of national salvation, a result, perhaps, of the Bismarckian dogma that only through war can nations grow and prosper. An endeavour to counteract this doctrine began to be productive of results, in the sense that many have quite understood the argument that the Balkan States can only be saved from foreign attacks if they forget their enmities, and combine for peace and progress. But the Chauvinists raised a great outcry against

the heresy of inter-Balkan love. In the meantime Austria attacked Serbia, and, whilst some Athenian newspapers were incensing their readers against me, most people thought that, after all, there must be something in the contention that inter-Balkan friendship is the best policy for Balkan salvation. The idea of a Balkan Federation was always repugnant to all the ordinary Balkan politicians, and not less so to the Greeks. Yet it was Regas, the protomartyr of the Greek Revolution of 1821, who first proclaimed the Federal ideal side by side with his appeal to the Greek nation to rise against the Turks. It is significant in this connection that Austrian spies seized Regas, and delivered him to the Austrian Government, which handed him over to the Turks. He was tortured to death. His last words were: "I am satisfied. I have sown sufficient seed. The time will come for the harvest." Indeed, it has come.

It is fortunate that Serbia so gallantly and so gloriously defeated the armies of the Dual Monarchy, but were it not that Germany is engaged by Russia, France, and England, who can say that the fate of Serbia would not be that of Belgium? And who can guarantee that each Balkan State will be always in so favourable a combination of events as to withstand the attack of a powerful enemy? Not one of the Balkan States would be able to realize its ideal single-handed. It is obvious now, more than at any other time, that their only salvation lies in union, and union can be achieved solely by goodwill among themselves, making mutual concessions, and refraining from Imperialistic day-dreams.

The Imperialistic mania has undoubtedly contaminated these peoples through their contact with Prussian conceptions of life. It has had the effect of making them forget that their sole endeavour should be to eliminate the Turkish rule. Each came gradually and imperceptibly to conceive and build for itself a dream of "Der Tag" of its own. Hence the militarist spirit in its fullest perversion took

possession of them all, and every other consideration—social, industrial, economic, ethical, intellectual, and spiritual—was thrown into the background, if not ignored altogether. Civilization seemed beyond comprehension, and art, culture, and thought out of the question. The Germans, at all events, had achieved much in these fields before they decided to become military machines; but their Balkan pupils embraced militarism, regardless of all human ideals. Then, to a considerable extent, Turkish fatalism, too, has vitiated the mentalities of public men in all the Near East, and they seem to think that one way or another it does not really matter what one does. The mere course of events, as the politicians generally imagine, cannot lead to the realization of ideals. Without human will the course of events is blind. Even the most virtuous conduct is fruitless *per se* without pointed volition. With the new dispensation eliminating Prussian militarism on the one hand and Turkish *laissez aller* on the other, it is possible to hope that the Balkan statesmen will be inspired by the conception that it is necessary to control fate by conscious endeavour to realize ideals.

II

The Balkan nations are of various races, religions, languages, and traditions, but there is one common bond which practically is enough to make them, if not one nation, at all events one system of nations. They all alike have one common economic interest, and one common ideal. This is the bond that unites them. It is their supreme interest to live as independent, prosperous units, and their supreme ideal to develop their potentialities for the benefit of the whole Near East. This can only be achieved by mutualism and combination. But they gave all their thoughts to rivalries arising from their dissimilarities which are unessential when they should have given their whole thought to co-operation dictated by their common economic

interest and by their common ideal, which are the essentials.

Perhaps the most important of all these dissimilarities is the racial one, since language, religion, and tradition matter less and less as education advances. The racial difference when examined better does not seem to present any great obstacle to common life and aims. The racial difference is rather fictitious, and although the Greeks are one distinct stock, the Slavs another, and the Turks another, it is only wrong education which fabricates superficial incompatibilities, easily made to disappear the moment these various races decide to work in common. I have travelled repeatedly in all those countries, and have come into touch with all the different races. My impression, corroborated by many other observers from Western Europe, is that there is hardly anything to substantiate a difference between a Bulgarian, a Serbian, a Greek, a Turk, or a Roumanian. Indeed, all the bases of discord in the Balkans—race, religion, language, and tradition—might be negligible quantities in face of the idea of Balkan unity and independence. But to smooth down dissimilarities, right education was necessary, and secondly, some strong influence—an active propaganda, for example—to counteract the intrigues of Foreign Powers. Both these necessary forces have been absent, and consequently wrong education and foreign intrigue have made of the Peninsula a hell, when its peoples might have made life upon it as much of heaven as fellowship can produce upon earth. In the words of William Morris, "Fellowship is heaven. Lack of fellowship is hell."

As I said, the Greeks form a distinct nationality. It has been moulded by many influences in the course of twenty-five centuries. It has not preserved the ancient impress, but it has inherited many good points as well as many bad points of the ancient stock. Its great need now is to realize the value of interdependence. It has substantially achieved its independence. But freedom is in-

conceivable and impossible without regard to the existence of other distinct units. This axiom must be embraced by all the Balkan nationalities, remembering that, as the welfare of the nation is more important than the welfare of the individual, so the welfare of humanity is more important than the welfare of the nation. Although I spoke of Turkey's tyrannical rule, I do not mean that the Turkish nationality need be eliminated from Europe. It is always necessary to discriminate between Governments and peoples, and the Turkish people is not an exception to the rule. There is a Turkish Democracy (with its vices, no doubt, as all the others), which is victimized by the Turkish rule just as the other democracies have been victimized by it for eight centuries. Even at this moment the blame for Turkey's conduct in the present war does not belong to the Turkish people, but to the Turkish Government.

But to return to Greece. It may be said that, with the rise of the Young Turks in 1908, which was the beginning of the end of Turkey, Greece entered upon a new era of life. The decade that preceded that year was the gloomiest in her history. It was her darkest hour before the dawn. In 1897 she was defeated by Turkey, in a war which had been engineered by Austria, in conjunction, it must be said, with Russia—the same two Powers which had engineered the Serbo-Bulgarian war in 1885. That defeat brought Greece very near giving up in despair her long struggle for national unity, a struggle begun in 1821, and carried on ever since at the cost of all other activities. Her whole energies have been so taken up by the need for military preparations that all ability for industrial and social reconstruction has been paralyzed. The struggle was not only for national unity, it was a struggle for very existence. The other States had the same struggle to carry on, and there was always Turkey, supported by the Powers, a hindrance to their full emancipation. But Turkey, for Greece, meant something worse than for the other States. It meant insulation, as Dr. Arnold Toynbee so aptly

remarks.* The Turkish dominions might as well have been an ocean on the north of Greece, as far as regards railway connection with western Europe.

The Greek war of independence, which lasted seven years, was perhaps the most tragic of all the epochs in Greek history, ancient or modern. It stirred the souls of poets and thinkers of Europe; but its Governments were content to look calmly upon the holocausts of the Greek nation, decimated by massacres and by atrocities unheard of before in any part of the world. Shelley and Byron aroused mankind, and Admiral Codrington put an end to the seven years' tragedy by destroying the Turkish fleet (it was an Egyptian fleet) on his own individual responsibility. Canning now proclaimed that the Greeks were not rebels, but belligerents against Turkey. Afterwards, England, France, and Russia undertook to create a Greek kingdom consisting of about a million souls, and left out of it several millions who, although they had fought for seven years for their freedom, were again subjected to the Turkish rule. England, France, and Russia constituted themselves, by the London Protocol, the three Protecting Powers of the little kingdom. The first increase of it was the cession to it by England of the seven islands of Western Greece, known as Ionian Islands or Heptanessos. That was in 1864. The Berlin Treaty in 1878 assigned to Greece Thessaly and Epirus through the advocacy of France and England, but Turkey consented to cede only Thessaly, four years later, while Epirus, was held back by Turkey until wrested from her grasp by the Greek arms in 1912.

It is clear that Greece would not be justified in relying entirely on the goodwill of the European Governments. She was bound to have an expensive army and navy, and that necessity impoverished her. But there was no suffering and deprivation to which the Greek people hesitated to submit for the sake of achieving national unity. This,

* "The Policy of Greece since 1882" (Oxford Pamphlets, 1914), one of the most useful accounts of Greek affairs I have ever read.

however, encouraged the politicians to contract loans, which intensified poverty, because none but the poorer classes are called upon to pay for the interest, by merciless taxation.

That Germany had an eye upon the Balkans, including Greece, is shown by the fact that the Kaiser in 1898 was very anxious that a Commission of Control should be placed by the Powers over the financial affairs of Greece. The same institution was imposed, through the solicitude of the Teutonic Powers, upon every one of the Balkan States, except Roumania, who escaped it by increasing taxation on the peasants to an enormous degree. In 1897 Crete was practically liberated as a result of numerous revolutions, and entered into the Hellenic organization. That liberation was, as it were, the herald or chanticleer of a new era, and the island has also provided the man who was destined to preside over Greece so admirably during the further stages of her national unification. I allude to the present Prime Minister. He was called to Athens at a critical moment. The Greek people, in 1909, led by General Zorbas, rose against the ineptitude of the politicians, and commissioned a Military League to carry out certain resolutions. Zorbas was Dictator for nearly a year, and it is to his infinite credit that he neither abused his absolute power nor desired to retain it longer than was necessary. He brought about a revolution without bloodshed, and when Venizelos came from Crete, quietly consented to retire, and let the more competent man solve the political problem.

At that time I discussed with Venizelos the affairs of the Balkan Peninsula, and we agreed that it might not be impossible to induce Turkey to enter into an alliance with Greece, with a view to invite all the other States to join and form a Balkan Entente as a basis for a Panbalkan League. With this understanding I went to Constantinople, and after conferring with the ruling Young Turks, I wrote to Venizelos that there was no reason to despair of the success of our object, since the Turks expressed to me

a desire to see him in Constantinople. The letter which he sent me in reply was mysteriously intercepted by an Austrian journalist, as I discovered afterwards, and although I received it one month later, after I met Venizelos again in Athens, it was too late to do anything. In my second visit to Constantinople I found the Young Turks quite different. They scorned the idea of Greco-Turkish co-operation, and when I told them that there might be a Balkan co-operation before long without Turkey, they laughed outright, saying that Turkey was powerful enough to crush all the Balkan armies put together.* This little incident is one of the many that go to prove the systematic frustration of all attempts at Balkan unity by means of the ubiquitous Teutonic agent. The opportunity for a concerted action by the Balkan States against Turkey was not long in coming. The Italian War prepared the way, and in the summer of 1912 four Balkan States achieved the miracle of burying their enmities and their disputes about division of territories. Such disputes have existed between Serbia and Bulgaria, and between Bulgaria and Greece, but no disputes about territories existed between Montenegro and Serbia. Indeed, these two might have been one State. Only Austria, by seizing Bosnia, which lies between them, managed to separate them. The policy of Balkan separation and division was a kind of creed with the diplomacies of Russia and Austria. It is known that in 1906 Austria frustrated the project of a Customs Union between Serbia and Bulgaria, and that Russia opposed the creation of a United Kingdom of Bulgaria and Roumania when Bulgaria offered her throne to the King of Roumania.

The chief disputes between Bulgaria and Serbia were about Uskub; but these States entered into a secret understanding which Bulgaria unexpectedly refused later to recognize. The disputes between Bulgaria and Greece were about Macedonia; but they agreed to make mutual

* Achmet Riza Bey, the Speaker of the House, said to me: "Monsieur Drakoules, c'est faire de la poésie que de parler d'Union Balkanique."

concessions which Bulgaria after the war refused to respect, notwithstanding that she secured from Greece what she wanted. That was the cause of the second war, although its immediate occasion was Bulgaria's sudden attack without warning one night in June, 1913, against both her allies. By the second war Bulgaria lost most of what she had secured. Greece nevertheless willingly ceded to her the *Ægean* outlets, *Lagos* and *Dede-Agatch*, which the Greek Fleet had occupied.

Mr. Venizelos gave Bulgaria every satisfaction in order to bend her towards friendship. Indeed, he went to the utmost possible limit of concession for the sake of amity, in spite of the implacable hatred consuming the two countries against each other. His opponents in Greece accuse him of having conceded more than he had a right to concede, and his critics abroad for not conceding enough. But *Kavalla* is the utmost possible limit, and Bulgarian statesmen would realize that if they were inspired by the principle "live and let live." When this is realized—and I found in *Sofia* public men animated by this opinion—I do not see any reason why Bulgaria and Greece should not be friends. And when the time comes for *Serbia*, in consequence of her present victories, to be able to afford to satisfy Bulgaria, an *Entente* between these three Central Balkan Powers, as I suggested to *Serbian*, *Bulgarian*, and *Greek* statesmen last summer, will be quite within possibility, and it would form the nucleus of a *Balkan Federation*, since *Roumania* would be the first to be drawn within the sphere of its attraction.

Salonika will indisputably remain an integral part of Greece. That is natural, reasonable, and just, and her next historic step is to enter the present war, which makes for nationalist solutions. There is little further to be achieved in order to complete the solution of the national problem—*i.e.*, national unification. Already Greece is recognized by universal sentiment as the Guardian of the *Asiatic Greeks*, who number between three and four millions, and naturally

are irresistibly attracted to the Hellenic Organization. The Balkan triumphs were not without vital effect upon Turkey in Asia. The blow against European Turkey had a commensurate effect upon Asiatic Turkey, and the stir in Asia is now considerable not only among the Greeks, but among all the other races. The reason is that Turkish rule is as intolerable to the Asiatic peoples as to the European. The nationalism of the Asiatic Greeks is very strong, and the recent events have given to it a new force. In this way a Greek problem in Asia Minor is within measurable distance. It involves Smyrna and Aivali. Then the Constantinople problem will loom on the horizon. And what will be the nature of this problem? Every problem has only one solution. Will that consist in making of Constantinople a small neutral Turkish State? This seems more logical than internationalization, but neither course is the one solution. Russianization, however desirable, would not constitute the solution, since it would keep Greek nationalism unsatisfied. With Constantinople anything may be done now that its former value has gone. It is not so valuable in these days of worldwide political interests. Anyone may be installed now in Constantinople but, notwithstanding any provisional arrangement, Constantinople, to my mind, is being rapidly drawn towards Greece, and that is bound to be recognized as the one solution. What has happened with Crete and Salonika is most likely to happen with Smyrna and Constantinople. For good or for ill, the Greeks will never forego their age-long claim to the capital of Constantine. But I do not think that Greece in possession of Constantinople would be an object of envy. With the loss of Constantinople Turkey expires not only in Europe, but also in Asia, and woe to him who should inherit her fabulous debts! That is a side problem which may suggest a supplementary solution, some *modus vivendi* with a Great Power. Or it may be that the financial difficulty will go to increase the argument for the Federal Solution. Then the problem alters, and the solution with it. The solution then

would be: Constantinople to become the centre of the Balkan Commonwealth.

Turning to the Ægean Islands, this question seems to me now quite settled since Turkey entered the war against the Entente Powers. With the exception of the islands occupied by Italy, which bide their time, all the others are practically within the radius of the Greek State. The whole dispute concerns only four islands, all occupied by Greece during the war; two of them, Mitylene* and Chios† have been assigned by the Powers to Greece, but to this Turkey objects. Who, however, attaches importance to the objections of Turkey after her auto-extinction? Two other islands, Imbros‡ and Tenedos,§ although in every respect Greek like all the others, have been assigned by the Ambassadorial Conference to Turkey in indulgence towards her, owing to their proximity to her Asiatic dominions—an indulgence which turns out now to have been misplaced. Both these islands after the present war will find themselves automatically incorporated with Greece. With regard to those occupied by Italy, it is difficult to see how Italy will be able to justify her retention of them much longer. She holds them contrary to the will of the inhabitants, forgetting the democratic principle to which she owes her own *risorgimento*. It is against the sentiment of the Italian nation itself that these islands should be occupied by Italy.

* Mitylene (or Lesbos) is the birthplace of Pittacos, one of the seven sages of ancient Greece. The island, with its Mount Olympus, has been admired and commented upon by Horace, who classed it with Ephesus, Rhodes, and Corinth; also by Thucydides, Diodorus, Xenophon, Strabo, and Pausanias. Longus laid out in this island the scene of his famous novel, "Daphne and Chloe."

† Chios is distinguished by the fact that its inhabitants suffered more than any other Greek community during the Greek War of Independence, nearly all being massacred on refusing to lay down their arms, and the atrocities of the Turks causing great indignation at that time in Europe.

‡ Imbros formed part of the Athenian Republic since the time of Miltiades, and is, perhaps, more Greek than any others of the Ægean Sea.

§ Tenedos is the island from whence Ulysses, the Ithacan anax, conducted his generals opposite to Troy, inside a wooden horse.

Italian Liberals, at all events, have expressed to me this view. Moreover, it does not please public opinion in England and France. Italy would be fulfilling a much higher mission by assisting the Balkan States to achieve federal union. It is likely that she will remain in Avlona, and there is all the more reason to rejoice in the fact that neighbourly cordiality prevails between Italy and Greece. There is every reason to hope, therefore, that Italy will soon recognize the natural justice of transferring Rhodes* and the other islands to Greece, the moment she finds that there is no Turkey to whom to transfer them.

I have already referred to the Epirus question, showing how it is practically settled. This question has been linked with that of the *Ægean* Islands, and both have found their solution almost simultaneously. The Epirotic problem is definitely solved by the "provisional" reoccupation of Epirus by Greece last October. It had been occupied before last year, when it was reconquered by the Greek armies during the first Balkan War, and evacuated in compliance with Austrian wishes.

One Greek island remains to be mentioned—Cyprus. It has been administered by England since 1878, and annexed by her last November. Supposing England had been disposed to cede Cyprus to Greece in the past, she could not, because she was bound by treaty to transfer it to no other power except Turkey. The treaty no longer exists, and England is free to do what she likes with the island. The population is Greek except 20 per cent. Turks, much Hellenized, and there is no doubt that the Cypriots desire to form part of the Hellenic Organization, however pleased they are with the British régime, and however grateful to England for having liberated them from the Turkish rule.

* Rhodes was renowned in the history of ancient civilization for its splendour, its admired schools of sculpture, its famous schools of oratory, all Hellenic.

A wealth of interesting details on the Archipelago is to be found in the admirable little book of Mr. H. F. Tozer, of Oxford, "*The Islands of the *Ægean*.*"

In the present circumstances Cyprus has a strategic value for England, and the Cypriots would be the last to desire a change just now. But it seems likely that both Cypriots and English one day will agree that the island ultimately must pass to Greece. I spent several months in Cyprus in the early years of the British occupation, and have quite realized the sentiment of the people. It is the same as that which animated my own fellow-countrymen of the Ionian Islands. They love the English, but dream dreams of national unity. I was five years old when the English left Ithaca, my own native island, but I distinctly remember how the people embraced in tears the departing "red-jacket" Tommies. And the Ionian Islands had never been under Turkish rule.

III

The Sofia politicians committed a fatal mistake when, dragged by the Chauvinist party, they provoked the second Balkan War. It has culminated in the ruin of their country, and at the same time established the future safety of Greece. The position of Greece would have been one of extreme difficulty if matters had remained where the issue of the first war had brought them. Mr. Venizelos was strongly averse to the idea of a second war, and consented only when Bulgaria imposed it. She thus rendered a service to Greece. As matters stood at the end of the first war, Bulgaria was far too predominant for Greece to feel safe from Bulgarian attacks in future. Greece was without Kavalla before the second war, and Salonika without Kavalla would have been in perpetual danger from the attacks of a powerful neighbour.

The position of Greece, therefore, has improved, while the position of Bulgaria has suffered, whereas both might have gained by eliminating Chauvinism. This illustrates the folly of the Chauvinistic malady, spread everywhere by the Teutonic mode of thought. This obsession leads its victims to the commission of errors which redound to the benefit of the hated nation.

As a consequence of the above situation, the enmity between the two countries has been intensified, and until this enmity is removed we cannot hope for a real understanding among the States of the Balkan Peninsula.

The Bulgarian Chauvinists have been the instruments of the Austro-German endeavour to break up the Balkan alliance, which, by the unexpected discomfiture of Turkey, had so provokingly thwarted the Teutonic scheme for the conquest of the Near East. It is to this scheme, pursued persistently and systematically for more than a generation, that we must ascribe the inability of the Balkan peoples to forget their jealousies and rivalries. Their differences have never really been so irreconcilable as to explain the continuous enmity between them all. If only the rulers of the Balkan States could have had sufficient courage to withstand the influences exercised by the agents of the neighbouring Great Powers, and sufficient goodwill to come to an understanding among themselves, the Eastern Question would have been long ago solved, without leading to the present world-wide conflagration.

The moral of these remarks is that if we are to look forward to a great and splendid future for the Near Eastern nations, it can only be on the condition that a new spirit should animate their motives and their activities. The great preoccupation of the Balkan peoples ever since they began to acquire national consciousness consists in the expectation of inheriting Turkey, in order that each may complete its national unity. Turkey for centuries was the sole hindrance to their development. This preoccupation was common to all of them, and only large-mindedness was required in order that they should make common cause. But as I said, strength of character was also required to enable them to drive away the foreign intriguers who were assiduously sowing discord amongst them.

The Balkan statesmen have always been devoid of goodwill among themselves, and also devoid of the necessary soul-force to repel the advances of interested foreign

advisers. One example is sufficient. At the Hague Conference the Roumanian delegates voted against arbitration solely because the German and Austrian delegates opposed arbitration and voted against it. The Balkan States have always been isolated from one another on account of this political ineptitude. But the politicians share the blame with the ecclesiastics, whose reactionary and unprogressive influence has done much to keep the Balkan peoples in a most backward condition. Obedient now to Russia and now to Austria, both politicians and ecclesiastics frustrated always every attempt to bring about a Balkan understanding. Sowing discord was the principal method of the Teutonic Powers (and at one time of Russia also) for preventing combination. That these Powers disliked the idea of a prolonged peace among the Balkan States is proved by many facts. Space allows mention of only one. After the revolution of Roumelia (now South Bulgaria), a Conference was held at Constantinople in 1885. A draft for an agreement was discussed, and the delegates of Austria and Russia struck out the clause, "It is the desire of all the Great Powers that peace should prevail all over the Balkan Peninsula." It is also certain that Austria seized Bosnia and Herzegovina on the strength of promised permission by Russia, but failed to fulfil her own part of the contract. Indeed, this little treachery of Austria towards Russia was the beginning of their open antagonism, prior to which they were trying to find a formula by which to divide the whole of the Peninsula among themselves. Now affairs and aspects have been altered root and branch, and there is wide scope for the display of goodwill and determination by the Balkan statesmen; and as for the ecclesiastics, the less they interfere with the national and Inter-balkan interests the better for their own countries.

A fact which must be realized by all is that economic interest links all the Balkan States into one unity, whatever other differences there may exist amongst them. Economic change must therefore underlie progress. Industry

in the Balkans will grow, and it is all the more necessary for those countries to adopt the federal principle, otherwise after the departure of Turkey there is danger that their antagonisms of the past will be worse in the future. Once they can grasp this they will be able to work in a catholic spirit, and if they begin by instituting a Customs union, the federal union will follow in due course. But if, instead of turning to this common ideal, they persist in their egoistic nationalisms, even after their national aspirations have been realized, as they have been so marvellously realized within the last two or three years, then the verdict of history will be that the Balkan peoples have become too deeply poisoned by the nationalist virus to be able to rise to any high purpose. The verdict of history will thus be passed upon dead, albeit martial, peoples.

There are many indications, however, that, assuming some conscious effort, a new spirit will prevail. The federal principle becomes more and more appreciated everywhere, and is more and more evolved into a definite ideal to be realized within a measurable period of time. There are already in the Balkans not a few who work for it. But it is necessary to discriminate very carefully between the imperialistic, dynastic, and plutocratic type of federation, and the democratic type, based upon the solidarity of the productive masses of all the Balkan countries. A Balkan federation under Teutonic or Slav auspices would be a remedy worse than the disease. The federation must be purely Balkan, and must aim at a Co-operative Commonwealth. In this endeavour the sympathy of England and France will be a great encouragement, the more so as the victory of the Entente Powers, of which it is now impossible to doubt, will inevitably lead to the inauguration of the United States of Europe. The federal principle is, indeed, in the air. Already some of its fruits have appeared in Canada, in America, in Australia, in Switzerland, and in the German States too. Nowhere the racial and religious antipathies were more intense than in Canada. All these

have vanished after the application of the federal principle. The American constitution is another example of signal success, in addition to the fact that it suggests that the democratic methods of political life are best adapted for federal application. The American constitution is a solution of the problem how to combine full local or national independence with general or international harmony. This is also shown in Australia, where State legislatures are so admirably federated, and at the same time equip the Commonwealth with efficient combined defence. The Balkan States, too, can take example from Australia as to the successful Customs union, in consequence of which production has increased enormously within the last decade. The British Empire as a whole is the best example of federation, because it proves that the union need not be very strict, but that, in fact, a loose organic connection is safer. There are students of constitutional evolution in England who think it probable that England will before long adapt her constitution in accordance with the federal principle in the political system of her four nationalities of the United Kingdom. Then we have the Swiss Confederation. During the mobilization of France last August I had to make a sojourn of five weeks in Switzerland, and was witness of the admirable way in which differences of race, language, religion, and tradition can be reconciled into unity and solidarity. The Swiss institution of the referendum would be of great utility as an example to the Balkan peoples. The German Confederation has many points of similarity with the American union, as, for instance, the independence of each separate State. This will become more apparent after the abolition of Kaiserism.

The federal solution would also avert all possible fears about Slavdom. The Slavs are one-third of the population of Europe. That a universal Slav influence is in store may be taken for granted; but it need not be otherwise than in the sense of a mode of thought calculated to fashion the coming aspects of civilization, and destined to further

the human weal. The Slav idiosyncrasy, characterized as it is by a peculiar vein of fraternity and transcendentalism, may contribute to social conceptions of a wider nature. Anything like domination of one race by another is so incompatible with the manifest course of evolution, that all such attempts are doomed to failure—witness the Teutonic attempt. There seems to be a power behind evolution which makes for real freedom, real equality, and real fraternity, and tends to transform civilization into humanization.

We have seen that it is inherent in the federal principle to combine the liberty of the members with the safety, unity, and development of the whole. It is in fact the application of the maxim "Each for all, all for each."

Everywhere the working out of the federal principle has been difficult; but wherever it has succeeded, it has succeeded through the determination of enlightened statesmen and the mutual generosity of the peoples concerned. With these conditions, and remembering the unifying effect of the economic interest, the Balkan States, now that they have no excuse for being absorbed by nationalist pre-occupation, can give their whole attention to this solution and to the organization of their social and productive forces in a comprehensive spirit of justice, humanity, solidarity, and goodwill.

OXFORD,

January 27, 1915.

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Greece, the Balkans, and the federal principle.

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